

Can volunteering lead to paid employment?

Volunteering can really help you get a job - but not always as quickly as you'd like. To get the most out of volunteering it helps to have realistic expectations.

If you take on a volunteer role, and are committed, you will get huge benefits. For example you can:

- Keep your skills fresh
- Get new skills and experience
- Increase your confidence levels
- Get references
- Socialise

The experiences you gain through volunteering will really help when you come to complete job applications and do interviews. But of course you will still have to apply and compete for any job. You may or may not get the first job you apply for, but you will be on the road to getting paid work.

To get the most out of your volunteering, it helps to think beforehand about what you would like to gain, such as particular skills or experience.

And, volunteering should be something you actively want to do. To put it another way, you shouldn't be *volunteered* – but you might *want* to volunteer!

Some facts and figures

In a government poll of people in employment, 41% reported that volunteering had helped them get into paid work.

Volunteering is a unique opportunity to try out different work-based roles, have regular, hands-on experience, receive training and support, and get a reference. 88% of people out of work and looking for a job said (in another national survey) that they believed volunteering has a positive effect on job prospects.